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THURSDAY, February 1, 1934

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "Household Get-Togethers for Efficiency." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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One man who has had to endure a lot of abuse down through the years is the traditional haphazard plumber, who makes half a dozen trips back to the shop for tools before he can finish his job. I'm sure you've heard plenty of unkind remarks about that gentleman and all others like him. I certainly have. In fact, in one home I know the very mention of absent-minded plumbers makes the whole family "see red". Mrs. Jones will tell you, her voice shaking with wrath, how one lazy, incompetent man kept the water turned off for hours on wash-day while he went back to find a wrench that would fit. Mr. Jones will speak up then and tell you about the big plumbing bill he had to pay afterward. And he'll probably add that any man as inefficient as that, any man who doesn't know enough to get the right tools together before he starts a job ought not to have a job, by George. And Mrs. Jones then will say that for her part she has no patience with workmen who don't know enough to prepare carefully in advance for any kind of work they have to do. "Just think," Mrs. Jones often says, "Just think what might happen if the doctor arrived with the wrong instruments and had to make several trips back after them."

Well, after that conversation, I'll confess to you that I had a shock one day in the Jones' kitchen when Mrs. Jones was making cake for dinner. She began by measuring the sugar. Then she looked for butter and found that the supply was low. So the cake-making was held up while Junior ran down to the store for more butter. Pretty soon it was time to beat the eggs. Mrs. Jones stopped and hunted for the egg beater, hunted high and low. We finally had to borrow a beater from a neighbor. The last minute Mrs. Jones found she was out of vanilla. And finally, when the cake at last was in its tin all ready for baking, she suddenly discovered that she hadn't lighted the oven. So the cake had to sit around and wait while the oven heated.

Guess who came to my mind during all this process. I'll confess. It was that haphazard plumber.

A few days later Mrs. Jones dropped in to make me a little visit. She told me she was all tired out dressmaking. Little Jane Elizabeth needed some school dresses and she had undertaken to make them.

"Dressmaking is such a long and tiresome job," sighed Mrs. Jones. "So much walking to do. So hard on the nerves, too."

"Walking?" said I. "So much walking in dressmaking?"

"Well, I mean running around -- upstairs and downstairs to find everything you need. I really believe I walked five miles making those dresses -- upstairs to the sewing basket, downstairs to the dining room table to cut out the patterns, back upstairs to stitch on the machine; and down again to press on the ironing board. And then, when I needed shears, I had to chase all over to find them. You know how things go. And when I was just ready to stitch I found the needle on my machine broken and there wasn't another to replace it in the house. As I often say to Mr. Jones, if you men know how exhausting women's work is--"

Well, I couldn't help thinking about that plumber again.

For the fact is that an efficient job of housekeeping requires assembling the right equipment just as an efficient job of plumbing does. Whether you're cooking or dressmaking or cleaning, the very first thing to do is to get ready. Have all your tools at hand--the right tools for the job, and have your supplies all assembled within reach. Then you can do the job easily, smoothly, quickly, and well.

Before you start to cook - to make any dish, read your recipe. Then have all your ingredients ready and at hand. Also get out your mixing bowl and whatever utensils you will need.

Clothing experts are urging home dressmakers to equip a room or a corner of a room as a sewing center. They suggest having your cutting table, machine, ironing board and iron, a comfortable chair, a good light and sewing supplies like needles, thread, scissors, patterns, and so on all assembled together in one room. Sewing won't be a disagreeable task when all the equipment is at hand ready to make the job go easily and efficiently.

Perhaps you've heard me mention the value of a little housecleaning kit--a basket to hold soap, brushes, scouring powder, furniture polish, and so on. This is just another case of assembling for the job. You can carry this basket around as you go from room to room cleaning. And you won't have to run back and forth, up and down to get supplies that you need. By the way, many women in large houses keep a mop, a broom and a dustpan upstairs as well as down to save steps in cleaning. You'll find it a great convenience if you keep all your cleaning utensils and supplies together in a cleaning closet. When you're ready to begin the job, they're all gathered there ready to help you.

Most modern kitchens are arranged with this "get-together" idea in mind. The specialists often speak of arranging your kitchen equipment according to the work centers to save crossing and recrossing the room. They say that the different tasks connected with food route themselves in a natural order around the room - from the food preparation center to the cooking center; then to the serving; and finally to the clearing-up center. So they advise arranging your equipment something like this. Near your worktable keep your measuring cups, spoons, beaters, bowls, rolling pin, molding board, cutters, choppers, knives, scissors, baking tins and cook book. And keep such supplies as flour, sugar, flavoring, baking powder, soda, and spices in the same location. But near the stove keep your teakettle, teapot, frying pans, griddles, lids, and so on. At the sink, have your

dishpan, dish cloths and towels, drainers, dish scrapers, soap and scouring materials, garbage pail and waste basket as well as brushes, knives, colanders and strainers.

See how it works out? All over the house and for every job, assemble the right tools and the right supplies to help make your work easy, pleasant and efficient. Get-togethers like this save time and work, often save money. What's more, they keep you out of the class of the much-abused plumber.

Tomorrow: "Meats for a Family of Two."

